

THAILAND

16 – 27 June 2016

MEDIA MONITORING REPORT # 150

PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

[DKBA Soldiers Reunite with KNLA](#)

Karen News, 20 June 2016

Soldiers from the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army, including a battalion commander, reunited with the Karen National Liberation Army 201 Battalion, Brigade 6th on June 17 in Kawkareik Township Karen State.



The DKBA troops led by Lieutenant Colonel Saw Naw Ku, commander of 908 Battalion, the deputy company commander Captain Saw Koo Nu, Platoon commanders Captain Saw Maw Ploe and Captain Saw Hla Khaing, a total of 21 troops with their arms and ammunition joined the KNLA troop led by Lieutenant Colonel Saw Bu Paw, commander of the KNLA's 201 battalion.

Lt. Col. Saw Naw Ku, spoke to *Karen News* about the reunification.

“Our leaders are working for peace in the country. We have seen enough division among Karen armed groups – we reunite, as we think it is the right time to do so.”

Lt. Col. Saw Bu Paw, commander of KNLA 201 battalion said, “We made a decision to reintegrate our armed forces at our 15th Congress. This reunification is strength for all Karen ethnic nationals and its politics.”

Link : <http://karennews.org/2016/06/dkba-soldiers-reunite-with-knla.html/>

[KNPP to discuss all-inclusive ceasefire with government](#)

Burma News International, 21 June 2016

The Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) will discuss with Myanmar's government how all ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) can be included in the nationwide ceasefire and peace process, a senior KNPP official told Shan Herald.

KNPP Secretary (2) U Shwe Myo Thant said that the KNPP had a meeting at its headquarters with top-ranking leaders on the



subject of future peace talks with the new government. At the meeting it was decided that the KNPP would continue to advocate for an all-inclusive peace process.

He said: “The policy hasn’t changed. We will continue to cooperate with the UNFC [United Nationalities Federal Council], which is a coalition of ethnic armed groups. We have decided to sign the nationwide ceasefire agreement only when everyone is included.”

During the meeting held at the KNPP’s headquarters on the Thai-Myanmar border, Khu Oo Reh the KNPP's Vice Chairman and Commander-in-Chief Gen Bee Htoo were selected to lead the negotiations with the government.

Link : <http://mizzima.com/news-domestic/knpp-discuss-all-inclusive-ceasefire-government>

ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT

[New rural healthcare centres aim to improve maternal, child health](#)

Myanmar Times, 20 June 2016

Nearly 80 health centres will be built in rural Myanmar to improve services and reduce inequality, according to the Three Millennium Development Goal Fund.



The first 17 centres have already been built in Magwe Region and handed over to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Another 61 will be constructed by 2017, financed by the 3MDG Fund, which is managed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

The focus of the healthcare provided in the centres is on maternal, newborn and child health, according to the statement. Services will also be available for the treatment and prevention of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria. All centres will have two to five staff and have the capacity to treat 30 to 50 patients a day.

After Magwe, the other centres will be built at several locations in Ayeyarwady (15 centres), Mandalay (2), Sagaing (17) and Yangon (3) regions, as well as Chin (5), Kayah (6) and Shan (13) states.

Link : <http://www.mmtimes.com/index.php/national-news/20937-new-rural-healthcare-centres-aim-to-improve-maternal-child-health.html>

[MNEC-run Post-ten relocates to Mon State](#)

Mon News Agency, 18 June 2016

Bop Htaw Education Empowerment Program, the second-year of the post-ten program operated by Mon National Education Committee (MNEC), has been moved to Thanbyuzayat Town, Mon State.

“Our Bop Htaw School aims to train students to become qualified teachers with critical thinking skills. We also provide English skills such as level four and up to advanced level. If the students chose to study such skills in Rangoon city, it would be very expensive. Therefore, I think it is a great opportunity for them to study here because they do not have to spend much money but they are trained under a well-



developed curriculum and hands-on training,” said Mi Pone Han, the program coordinator of Bop Htaw’s second-year program.

The program began in 2000 and runs over two years. The program requires the applicants to hold a high school completion level from state-run schools or MNEC run schools. The applicants from Mon teacher groups must have carried out teaching at respective schools for 3 years.

The second-year Post-Ten program started its 2016-2017 academic year on June 1, at its new location in Thanbyuzayat Town.

MNEC has 138 schools, including Bop Htaw Empowerment Program, 3 high schools, 16 middle schools and 89 primary schools.

Link : <http://monnews.org/2016/06/17/mnec-run-post-ten-relocates-mon-state/>

France pledges to provide 200-mln-euro aid to Myanmar

Xinhua, 17 June 2016

French Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Development Jean-Marc Ayrault said on Friday France will provide 200 million euros (266 million U.S. dollars) in development aid to Myanmar.

Ayrault told a joint press conference with his Myanmar counterpart Aung San Suu Kyi that France's assistance has already been in place in Myanmar with its aid doubled for the youths of the country.

The French Development Agency (AFD) is also involved in Myanmar's development process, especially in urban planning, energy and health sectors, he said, adding that the number of French companies investing in Myanmar is also increasing.

The French minister stressed that the Mayor Office of Paris is ready to help Myanmar concerning with urban planning.

Link : http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-06/17/c_135445678.htm

Support is better than protection, government’s new economic policy

Mizzima, 16 June 2016

“Our government will not give favor to anyone and there will be no discrimination. We will give all Myanmar nationals equal opportunity.” Union Minister of Planning and Finance Kyaw Win said at a meeting held at Union of Myanmar Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) on 13 June, the meeting was held for



the first time with Myanmar traders and entrepreneurs and it lasted about three hours.

At the meeting, the Minister also said, “We will give support as much as we can to the extent that all businesses will be able to better perform. We will give support rather than protection to them. So I would like to say let our government give support to the businesses of Myanmar nationals,”

The current Union Minister of Planning and Finance took the position of Chairman of the newly reconstituted ‘Myanmar Investment Commission’ (MIC). He claimed that the cause of prolonged poverty in the country was the concentration of economic opportunities in the hands of a few in the previous

government. The new NLD government would provide economic opportunities to all Myanmar citizens equally and would disclose their new economic policies soon to the public.

“Currently, I cannot talk about the matter as it has not yet been officially approved. This new policy will be made public this month at the earliest. In brief, the new policy will give equal opportunity to all Myanmar citizens,” the minister told the media.

Link : <http://mizzima.com/business-domestic/support-better-protection-government%E2%80%99s-new-economic-policy>

Sweden provides financial support for UNDP’s work in Myanmar

Mizzima , 18 June 2016

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has received an additional 30 million Swedish krona (approximately US\$3.6 M) from the Government of Sweden to support the agency’s work in Myanmar in the areas of democratic governance, local development and environmental sustainability, according to a press release June 17.

Swedish support has been instrumental in the establishment of Rule of Law Centres around the country, which promote improved awareness of human rights and social justice amongst community leaders and legal professionals, and enhanced community engagement on justice issues.

Earlier this year, the Director General of the Swedish International Development Agency(Sida), Ms Charlotte Petri Gornitzka met with local level women Village Tract/Ward Administrators and members of the Myanmar Rural Women’s network, May Daw Kabar during a visit to the Myanmar. Enhancing women’s leadership and rights are a key area within the UNDP program.



Link : <http://mizzima.com/development-news/sweden-provides-financial-support-undp%E2%80%99s-work-myanmar>

Development at forefront of new budget

Mizzima, 16 June 2016

Myanmar’s Financial Commission held its first meeting in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday, with President U Htin Kyaw addressing the crowd and stressing the need for the new government to bring forward a constitution that focuses on national reconciliation, internal peace and democratic federalism, state media reported on 16 June.



President U Htin Kyaw also promised increased spending on education, health and social welfare to ensure more human resources, adding that development policies would be focused on the implementation of rural development, electrification, poverty alleviation and infrastructural development.

The meeting discussed the 2016-2017 budget approved by the previous government and an amendment of the ‘16-’17 budget to be submitted to the parliament for

approval.

Link : <http://mizzima.com/development-news/development-forefront-new-budget>

UNICEF-funded Mon textbooks provided to State Gov't

Mon News Agency, 23 June 2016

The UNICEF group provided the Mon state government with 73,000 Mon language textbooks, 80,000 exercise books, 5,000 fairy tales books, as well as grammar and teacher guide books.

“The Mon text books that are funded and offered by UNICEF will now be handed to the state education department. We will work toward respective schools receiving the textbooks and the teachers can use them effectively,” said U Min Min Oo, Mon State Chief Minister.

Dr. Min Nwe Soe, chairman of Mon Textbook Curriculum Committee said that the curriculum development committee faced many difficulties while working on the curriculum, but believed the committee did the best it could for schools in Mon communities across Mon and Karen states and Tenasserim Division. The current committee is ready to assist future committees in need of help for developing textbooks.



The Mon State Hluttaw enacted in April, 2014, that starting from the 2014-15 academic year, Mon language could be taught during class time. However, the current government has only provided this class as an after school class.

Link : <http://monnews.org/2016/06/23/unicef-funded-mon-textbooks-provided-state-govt/>

Prosthetic Workshop Center Opens in Hlaingbwe Township

Karen News, 27 June 2016

A prosthetic leg production center has been set up in Klo Yaw Lay area of Hlaingbwe Township on June 20, with the coordination of Kawthoolei Department of Health and Welfare and Mae Tao Clinic with support of donors from South Korea.



The building of the prosthetic workshop started in February 2016.

Padoh Eh K'lu Shwe Oo said that they plan to provide everyone in the Pa-an district who need prosthetic legs through its workshop and they are also planning to expand into other KNU controlled districts such as Doo Pla Ya and Papun (Mu Traw).

All the necessary materials for the prosthetic workshop have been supported by donors from Korea. Training courses will be given to KNU soldiers who had lost their legs and also local civilians under the supervision of KDHW.

The opening ceremony of the prosthetic workshop center was held on June 20 and Dr. Cynthia Maung, director of Mae Tao Clinic, Padoh Saw Eh K'lu Shwe Oo, Head of KDHW, representatives of the South Korean donors (Korea – Mae Sot Cooperation Center), KNU Pa-an District officials, health workers, KNU officers and local residents – over a hundred people attended.

Link : <http://karennews.org/2016/06/prosthetic-workshop-center-opens-in-hlaingbwe-township.html/>

LAND AND PROPERTY

Over 232 acres of land confiscated by army and government ministries being returned for temporary use

KIC –20 June 2016

The department of farmland management under Karen state government, has returned 232.4 acres of land that were confiscated in the past by light infantry batallion (338) and (339), state prison authority, and former industrial zone 2, to its original owners on June 17.

The returned land are from Karen state; Than Moe Taung village of Than Taung Gyi township, Lekana village of P' an township, and Kawk Laing village of Hlaingbwe township, and the return ceremony being held at Kan Tha Ya hall, P' an, Karen state and was attended by Karen state chief minister and staff members from farmland management department.

According to state department of farmland management and record director U Naing Aung, "The now returned land has been carefully scrutinized and found to be unused. We returned this land depends on how farmers worked the land. If we do it legally then we have to wait for any opposing letter according to the law which will take at least a month. If we go according to every step then it will take 89 days. Therefore, for the cultivators to plant crops on time we only provide them with a temporary permit. Then we will work out official ownership transfer the soonest possible according to the law.



The 232.4 acre of land that are returned to its current original owners is a small part of land that was confiscated, and there are many farms and lands left to be returned to its rightful owners, according to owners from whom farms and lands were taken.

'The lands that are returned now are only a small part. There are plenty of lands that were taken by the army and did nothing. The farms that are being returned now are a long distance from the village. The farms are the ones that's not productive, what to use with it. If they want to return the land do it the same to everyone, don't differentiate among people. And also ask people properly before you return the land. There are large parts of land they took it from me, but none of it included among they returned.' said Saw Pauh Pya, a Kawk Laing villager from Hlaingbwe township, to KIC.

The government has taken plenty of lands from the villagers in Karen state since 1991, and they want the government to return these lands to them as soon as possible, according to local villagers who are waiting to get back their land.

(Translated by IMU Maesot)

Link:

<http://kicnews.org/2016/06/%E1%80%85%E1%80%85%E1%80%B9%E1%80%90%E1%80%95%E1%80%B9%E1%82%8F%E1%80%BD%E1%80%84%E1%80%B9%E1%80%B7-%E1%80%9D%E1%80%94%E1%80%B9%E1%82%80%E1%80%80%E1%80%AE%E1%80%B8%E1%80%8C%E1%80%AC%E1%80%94%E1%80%99/>

The content of the UNHCR Thailand Media Monitoring Reports does not reflect the official view or opinion of the UNHCR.

Links: Thailand-Myanmar Cross Border Web Portal: www.commonservice.info

Facebook: www.facebook.com/commonservice
www.facebook.com/commonserviceburmese
www.facebook.com/commonservicekaren